

Description

Midwifery in the Midst of Madness

Pandora T. Hardtman RN, CNM, DNP, FACNM – International Midwifery Consultant

On May 5th International Day of the Midwife, the theme of Midwives Defenders of Women's rights was celebrated across the globe, with various forms of community service and celebration. As the Syrian war rages on in its 9th year, we are now called to ask the question, Who defends the midwives? The conflict continued, even as the Syrian midwives officially honoured the day for the first time ever serving women and families as 'hundreds' of planes flew overhead.



In the past week, escalated targeted bombardment of the last enclave of civilians near Idlib has led to the several thousand refugees taking to the streets to seek a safety that is nowhere to be found. The situation has been likened to a genocidal apocalypse in which health care workers and facilities are premium targets.

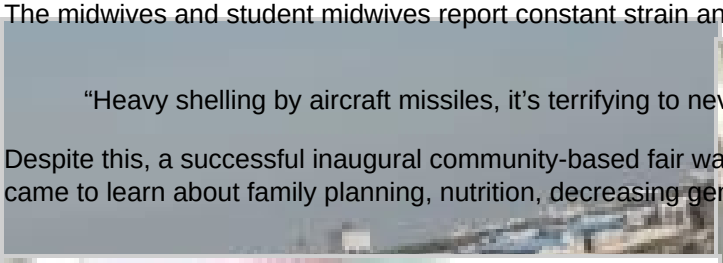
Observers predict that thousands more will die unless immediate action is taken. Another 4 health care facilities were lost on May 5th as the midwives continued to be with women.

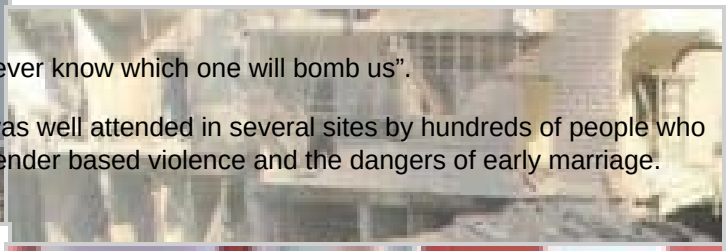
> "What, I see today is the displacement of large numbers of people who leave their homes to escape the bombing – now they are out in the open, what will happen next?"

This quote was from a Syrian midwife educator who has been displaced 3 times and lives now separated from her

children who have been relocated to another country in an attempt to ensure their safety.

The midwives and student midwives report constant strain and extreme fatigue:





“Heavy shelling by aircraft missiles, it’s terrifying to never know which one will bomb us”.

Despite this, a successful inaugural community-based fair was well attended in several sites by hundreds of people who came to learn about family planning, nutrition, decreasing gender based violence and the dangers of early marriage.





Ramadan begins, and with it adherence to one of the five pillars of zakat – charitable acts. However, charitable acts for women and children should not bring death in the colours of the rainbow – we go to the hospital and we know our time will come, we live and serve in anticipation and fear. A plea from the Syrian midwives:

> "We are calling upon all of the midwifery organizations of the world to recognize the situation of our people, who are burning. Help us."



Speech does not express what burns our hearts from the images of destruction, death displacement, our hearts bear the agency of Allah to heal all of our injustice. The soul of midwifery remain steadfast in the madness, the first group of 40 ICM standard bridging nurses to midwives has assisted with bringing into the world 435 infants and conducting over 900 ANC visits in the last 3 months alone. We honour the courage of Syrian midwives who in the most difficult of circumstances continue to provide care for women and their newborns.

POSSIBLE ACTION POINTS

- We ask you as colleagues and sister midwives to remember the promise made of never again referencing acts of mass genocide. We ask you to speak out, take a stand for justice and tell the story as it unfolds
- We ask you to write to urge the UN Security Council and the international community to implement UNSC resolution 2286 for the protection of medical facilities and aid workers. https://www.ohchr.org/EN/AboutUs/Pages/ContactUs.aspx
- We urge the international community to release emergency humanitarian funding for medical aid, shelter, food, water and sanitation.

We ask you to defend midwives the defenders of womens's rights.

Category

1. News & Views

Tags

1. mass genocide
2. syria
3. war

Date Created
8th June 2019